

Madison Avenue Presbyterian Church

## PASTORAL STAFF LETTER

announcements, updates, and information for the weeks ahead



**October 29, 2020**

### **A Letter from Rev. Dr. J. Patrick Vaughn**

Dear Friends,

As some of you know, our son, Nathan, moved west in August to attend the University of Wyoming. He began working on a graduate degree in history. Throughout college he expressed strong interest in early medieval history but that apparently changed. He is now more focused on American history.

In a recent conversation I asked if he had given much thought to his thesis. He said that he was drawn to the modernist/fundamentalist debate of the early 20th century.

I said, "Are you going to consider the influence of Henry Sloane Coffin?"

He replied, "Yes. As a matter of fact, he is one of the figures I might explore."

Of course, I then asked, "Did you know that he served for a number of years as the pastor of Madison Avenue?"

He had not made that connection but added that he might spend time next summer conducting research in Philadelphia and New York.

I hope that happens! Not only do I want to spend time with him but I also think he will thoroughly enjoy this area of study.

If he does choose to focus on Henry Sloane Coffin, he will discover a leader who appreciated the rich and vital relationship between the world and the church. Coffin and others in the Social Gospel movement rejected the simplistic and deeply flawed separation of the material world and the spiritual world. They understood that these are different sides of the same coin and that our spiritual commitments are empty when they do not make an impact on the

real lives of real people in need of real community facing real challenges.

In other words, when our faith in Christ does not lead to embracing the stranger or feeding the hungry or walking with the mentally ill or laughing with children or speaking out on behalf of the silenced, it is nothing more than a noisy gong or a clanging cymbal. When our faith does not make a difference in how we use our time or spend our money or set our priorities we no longer follow the living Lord but a domesticated Jesus entombed in nostalgia.

As we approach the November 3 election, we are perhaps more divided as a nation than at any other time since the election of 1860. That might be an exaggeration but I doubt it. In this polarized climate passions are running deep, and the stress of the pandemic has left many of us exhausted, weary, and afraid. Uncertainty also has a way of exacerbating anxiety. We might know the winner of the presidential election Tuesday evening, but there is a strong possibility that the winner will not be declared until later.

What, then, will we do in the meantime?

What will we do after a winner has been announced?

We will continue to bear witness to Christ. In the spirit of Henry Sloane Coffin we will embrace the stranger and feed the hungry and walk with the mentally ill and laugh with the children. We will continue to point to the life and love of Jesus.

That's what we do as Christians, and that's how we bear witness at Madison Avenue.

Thinking of you.  
Patrick

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## Looking Forward to Advent

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The upcoming season of Advent will be different than in the past, but pandemic or not, the seasons march on, and we need this season of expectation and hope more than ever this year. We are assembling Advent boxes that members can pick up at the church. For our "safer at home"

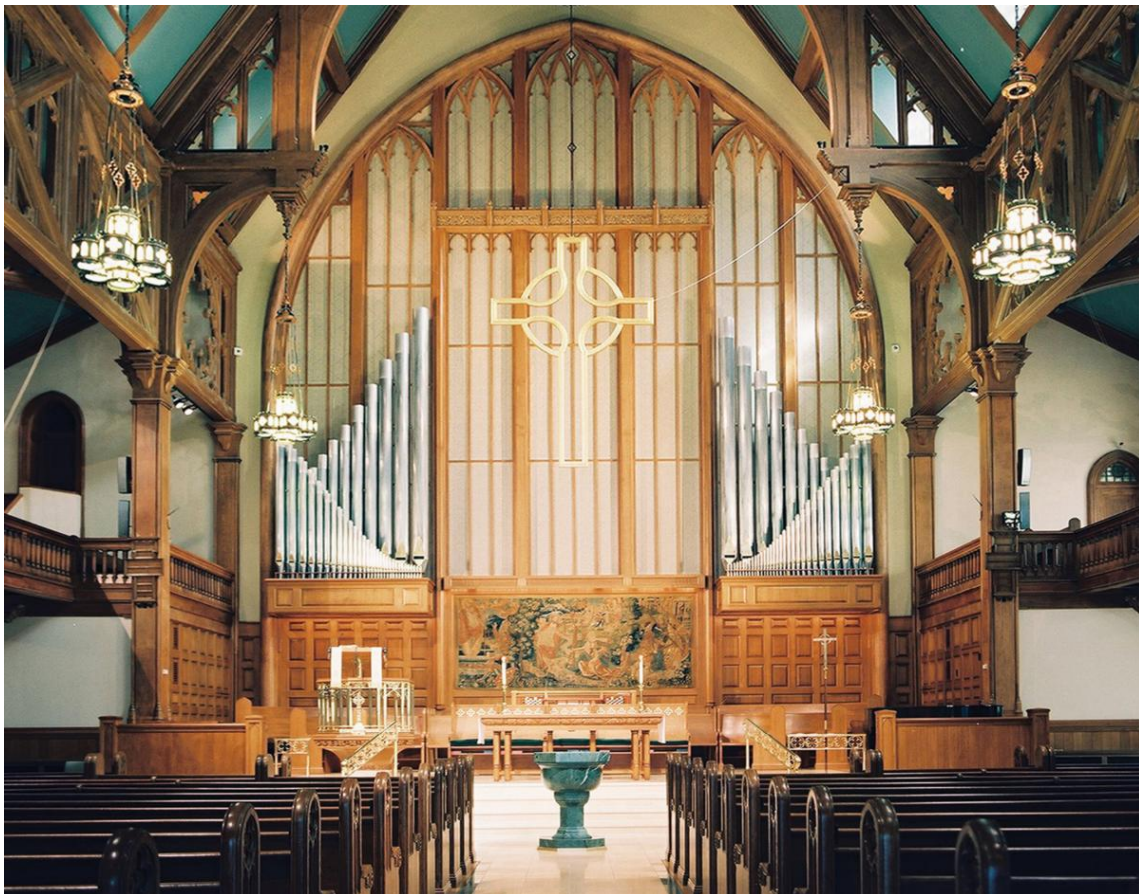
members, we will deliver them to your building. Below is a link to sign up for a box for yourself/your family. The box will have a variety of items to help you observe the season--simple Advent candles, Advent devotions, craft activities, alternative Advent calendars, and a booklet created by YOU!! Please send a favorite cookie or other recipe or seasonal tradition (i.e. movies you watch, books you read, music you always listen to, activity your family enjoys) by email to April Martin, [aem@mapc.com](mailto:aem@mapc.com). We will assemble them into a booklet to include in the Advent boxes.

During the noon Fellowship Hours, starting with the 1st Sunday in Advent on November 29th, we will share in Advent devotions together.

Advent boxes will be available to pick up on Monday, November 30 and Tuesday, December 1 from 4 - 6 pm each afternoon. Please sign up for one here--note you have choices based on your family configuration and preferences--and indicate whether you can pick up or need your box to be delivered. Thank you!

[Sign Up for an Advent Box Here](#)

## 2020 Stewardship Campaign



The Stewardship and Development Committee has worked diligently to plan this fall's stewardship campaign. In the spring it became clear that the original

plan for the fall would have to be adjusted since in-person gatherings would not be possible. Next week MAPC members should watch for an invitation, sent both by email and hard copy, to participate in a virtual fall fellowship gathering. There are eight gatherings you can choose from (the dates will be in the invitation). We will limit these Zoom gatherings to a maximum of 20 people to allow for the opportunity for conversation. Our Transitional Minister, Dr. Vaughn, will be at each gathering as will Rev. Bartlett. It is a challenging time to get to know a new pastor, and this is one of the ways we can do that. We hope to see you at one of the fall fellowship gatherings.

In addition to the gatherings, church officers will be calling active members to check in, see how you are doing, share news about the church's ministry and finances, and encourage you to join them in making a pledge for 2021.

Giving is a joy. It is one of the ways we respond to God's grace and abundant mercies. And now more than ever, we, our city and our world need the church's ministry and witness to the love and justice of Jesus Christ.

The verses below, selected from Isaiah 58, provide the theme for this year's campaign. We encourage you to read and reflect on the entire chapter.

"If you remove the yoke from among you  
And satisfy the needs of the afflicted  
The Lord will guide you continually  
And you will be like a watered garden  
Like a spring of water  
Whose water never fails."

When we use our time, energy, and resources to bring life and wholeness to others, we in turn will flourish as a well-watered garden.

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## Worship

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**Please join us for online worship.**

The Rev. Dr. J. Patrick Vaughn will be preaching this coming  
Sunday, November 1.

### **Sunday Worship**

Join us for pre-recorded services of worship on Sunday mornings.  
Find all our services here:

[Click Here to Watch](#)

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## **Morning Prayer, Sunday, November 1 at 9 am**



# in the Sanctuary

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*Don't forget to turn your clocks back an hour!!*

## **Important Note About Morning Prayer:**

This Sunday, we are moving Morning Prayer into the Sanctuary. Physically distant spacing is marked. Please enter through the Church House to have your temperature taken and sign the symptom-free attestation. An usher will dismiss worshippers by pew, and we ask that you wait to say hello and speak to others until you are back outside in the fresh air.

The Morning Prayer service, described below, will be similar to the service we have been offering on the Roof Garden.

As long as the city and state health guidelines allow, we will continue to offer Morning Prayer services on Sunday mornings at 9 am. If you are unfamiliar with this type of service--it is not that different from a regular Sunday service, minus the sermon and communion! It is about 25 minutes long, and includes prayers, hymns, scripture readings and some time for reflection. We can accommodate 25 people (plus staff) and request that you sign up ahead of time.

We need to keep track of numbers and information for contact tracing. Masks covering both the nose and mouth must be worn at all times.

We will take temperatures and have those who attend sign a health attestation--which is the church's policy for everyone entering the building. Please note that we are following (and exceeding) the recommended safety guidelines for participating in worship and singing hymns together.

If you have trouble making your reservation, please contact Beverly Bartlett at [bab@mapc.com](mailto:bab@mapc.com).

Here is the link for signing up:

[Reserve Your Spot Here](#)

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## **A Virtual Music on Madison Series**

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As with so many aspects of our lives this year, the Saint Andrew Music Society will be doing something different this fall! We invite you to join us for a series of special online broadcasts on Sunday afternoons from the sanctuary of Madison Avenue Presbyterian Church. This coming Sunday's performance features some longtime favorite instrumentalists in our Saint Andrew Orchestra: violinist Jorge Ávila and cellist Arthur Fiacco, along with

organist Andrew Henderson, including works by Bach, Handel, Mozart and Massenet. While we'll be releasing the performance this Sunday afternoon, the concert will be available for future viewing anytime. Be on the lookout for an email blast this Sunday at 3 pm, check out the SAMS section of our [website](#), or "Like" our [Facebook](#) page.



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## Wednesday Prayer

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Beginning this coming week, weekday devotions will be posted on Wednesdays. We hope that with Wednesday devotions, Morning Prayer in person on Sundays and our recorded Sunday worship service you will find devotions and worship opportunities that help sustain you during these times.

[Click Here to Watch](#)

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## Opportunities for Fellowship & Study

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Zoom invites are sent regularly by email.

### Virtual Fellowship Hour

*Sundays at 12 noon*

Please join us for Virtual Fellowship Hour. Every Sunday.

**\*\*NOTE:** An email with the Zoom link will be sent out on Sunday mornings at 8 am.

### A Walk in the Park



April will lead "A Walk in the Park" this Saturday, Oct. 31 at 9 am. Let's meet at the Southwest corner of 72nd Street and 5th Avenue. See you there!

## Halloween Gathering in Central Park

About 27 MAPC members and staff gathered for fellowship, treats and play at Cedar Hill last Saturday. We had a wonderful time at our alternative Halloween fest, and it was so good to see each other in person. Here are some photos from the afternoon.







## Trick or Treating on the Steps

We will once again have trick-or-treating on the church steps from 4 - 6 pm on Halloween this Saturday!! We will do it a little differently this year-- setting out a table with treats so we are not directly handing things to people. We hope this gives the congregation an opportunity to safely drop by and say hello!

***We are still accepting candy donations!!** If you are able to drop off a bag or two of candy to contribute to our Trick-or-Treating on the steps, please leave them with the church receptionist. Thank you!*



## Young Adult Gatherings on Zoom

***Mondays from 7 to 8 pm:***

***Nov. 9, Nov. 23, Dec. 7, Jan. 11, and Jan. 25***

Young adults will be studying Ephesians this fall. Bring your drink for a mid-evening happy hour and join us for fellowship and discussion.

Chesna Hinkley & April Martin will lead this group on Zoom. Please watch your email for the link and more information.

## Anti-Racist Discussion Group, Sunday mornings at 10 am

***Resuming Sunday, November 1***

This Sunday morning Anti-Racism Discussion Group will resume meeting on



Sunday, November 1.

The group will share what they learned or were able to do 21 Day Challenge, and discuss the first two chapters of Ibram X. Kendi's book, "How to Be an Anti-Racist".

There are many versions of the "21 Day Challenge", and we thought we would try the one posted on the PCUSA website:

<https://www.presbyterianmission.org/ministries/matthew-25/racism/>

Rather than committing to doing something every day, we will try to do something on seven days over the next two weeks.

The original 21 Day Challenge was created by Eddie Moore, Jr., and you can find that here:

[https://www.eddiemoorejnr.com/21daychallenge/#connect\\_](https://www.eddiemoorejnr.com/21daychallenge/#connect_)

It is a treasure trove of resources.

You can check out an e-book version of Kendi's book from the NYPL:

[https://browse.nypl.org/iii/encore/search/C\\_\\_Sibram%20x%20kendi\\_\\_Ff%3Afacetmediatype%3Az%3Az%3AE-BOOK%3A%3A\\_\\_Orighresult\\_\\_U\\_\\_X0?lang=eng&suite=def](https://browse.nypl.org/iii/encore/search/C__Sibram%20x%20kendi__Ff%3Afacetmediatype%3Az%3Az%3AE-BOOK%3A%3A__Orighresult__U__X0?lang=eng&suite=def)

*Please feel free to join in this discussion even if you have not been able to do the reading!!*

Feel free to jump in to any discussion as you are able. It doesn't matter if you can make each one. If you would like more information on this discussion group, or would like to be added to the group emails, please contact Rev. Bartlett at [bab@mapc.com](mailto:bab@mapc.com).

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## Bible Studies

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### Monday Evening Bible Study

*1st and 3rd Mondays of the month at 7 pm*

The next Evening Bible Study will be Monday, November 2nd. We are studying the Sermon on the Mount from Matthew, using Amy-Jill Levine's book, *Sermon on the Mount: A Beginner's Guide to the Kingdom of Heaven*, and will be discussing chapter 3 on the 2nd. You are welcome to jump into the Monday Evening Bible Study at any time--just contact Rev. Bartlett at [bab@mapc.com](mailto:bab@mapc.com) so she can send you the Zoom link.

You can order a copy (hard copy or Kindle) of Dr. Levine's book through Amazon, or order from [bookshop.org](http://bookshop.org) to support independent bookstores. Here is a link for both options:

<https://bookshop.org/books/sermon-on-the-mountain-a-beginner-s-guide-to-the-kingdom-of-heaven/9781501899898>

[https://www.amazon.com/Sermon-Mount-Beginners-Kingdom-Heaven-ebook/dp/B0859M58ZL/ref=sr\\_1\\_1\\_sspa?dchild=1&keywords=sermon+on+the+mount+levine&qid=1600734777&sr=8-1-spons&psc=1&spLa=ZW5jcnlwdGVkUXVhbGlmaWVyPUEyWTdlWkEwOTk1VThPJMVuY3J5cHRlZElkPUEwNjM5NTAyMlJMWESyTDZVUFIIQiZlbnNyeXB0ZWRBZEIkPUEwNzA5NjUyMkhCV05VSUVVVUJRQSZ3aWRnZXR OYWl1PwX2F0ZiZhY3Rpb249Y2xpY2tSZWRpcmVjdCZkb05vdExvZ0NsaWNRPXRydWU=](https://www.amazon.com/Sermon-Mount-Beginners-Kingdom-Heaven-ebook/dp/B0859M58ZL/ref=sr_1_1_sspa?dchild=1&keywords=sermon+on+the+mount+levine&qid=1600734777&sr=8-1-spons&psc=1&spLa=ZW5jcnlwdGVkUXVhbGlmaWVyPUEyWTdlWkEwOTk1VThPJMVuY3J5cHRlZElkPUEwNjM5NTAyMlJMWESyTDZVUFIIQiZlbnNyeXB0ZWRBZEIkPUEwNzA5NjUyMkhCV05VSUVVVUJRQSZ3aWRnZXR OYWl1PwX2F0ZiZhY3Rpb249Y2xpY2tSZWRpcmVjdCZkb05vdExvZ0NsaWNRPXRydWU=)

## Women's Bible Study

The Women's Bible Study, which is currently studying the Psalms, meets by teleconference. The next meeting is Monday, November 9. Please contact Lissette Perez-Erazo for more details: [lgp@mapc.com](mailto:lgp@mapc.com)

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## Youth and Children at MAPC this Fall

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### Youth (Ages 6th - 12th Grade)

YOUTH! For two Wednesdays in November, we will meet *in-person* for safe games and pizza-to-go. Lots of fellowship, food, and fun! Meet in the Church House Lobby right at 5:45.

November 4 and 18, 5:45-7 pm.

YOUTH ON THE ROAD! On December 9, we will carol outside for our neighbors who are staying "Safe at Home" during the pandemic.  
December 9.

### Children: Faith and Fun (Connecting Virtually)

MONDAYS FOR KIDS! (K-2nd grade) **on Zoom**. This fall, we will learn about covenants. Mondays for Kids will meet **on Nov. 2, 16 & 30, Dec. 14 at 4:30-5:15 pm**.

Contact Chesna Hinkley ([ceh@mapc.com](mailto:ceh@mapc.com)) for more info and watch this space for updates!

PRETEEN CONNECT (3rd-5th grade) **on Zoom**.

This fall, we'll learn about the beginnings in God's story. Preteen Connect will meet **Nov. 11, and Dec. 9 at 4:30-5:15 pm**. Contact Chesna Hinkley ([ceh@mapc.com](mailto:ceh@mapc.com)) for more info and watch this space for updates!

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# Three Ways to Give to MAPC During this Time

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We are grateful to all of you for your financial support of the church during this time. As you know, the church continues to be the church, with staff to pay, buildings to maintain, and ministries to carry out even though our buildings are closed. We understand that with job losses and furloughs, many people are not able to contribute financially. For those of you who are able to continue your financial pledges and offerings, click on the link below to see the three ways you can give:

[Give Now](#)

*Thank you for your faithful giving!*

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## Links for MAPC Worship Services

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### Sunday Worship

See pre-recorded services of worship below.

[Click Here to Watch](#)

### Children's Worship

Find all of our children's worship videos here:

[Click Here to Watch](#)

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## MAPC on Social Media

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### Facebook

Follow MAPC on Facebook for news, reminders, events, and pictures from everyday life at the church. It's a good way to engage in fellowship and to know what's going on each week.

[facebook.com/MadisonAvenuePresbyterian/](https://facebook.com/MadisonAvenuePresbyterian/)

